AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-80 (cancelled).

Claim 81 (new): An isolated and purified polynucleic acid encoding a biologically active STRAP polypeptide, wherein the STRAP polypeptide is at least about 99% identical to a sequence as set forth in SEQ ID NO: 2.

Claim 82 (new): The polynucleic acid of claim 81, wherein the STRAP polypeptide is SEQ ID NO: 2.

Claim 83 (new): The polynucleic acid of claim 81, wherein the polynucleic acid has the sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO: 1.

Claim 84 (new): The polynucleic acid of claim 81, further defined as comprising at least a 1,000 nucleotide long contiguous stretch of the polynucleic acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 1.

Claim 85 (new): The polynucleic acid of claim 81, in a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

Claim 86 (new): The polynucleic acid of claim 81, further defined as a DNA segment.

Claim 87 (new): A recombinant vector comprising the polynucleic acid of claim 81.

Claim 88 (new): The recombinant vector of claim 87, wherein the vector is a recombinant expression vector.

Claim 89 (new): The recombinant vector of claim 87 in a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

Claim 90 (new): A recombinant host cell comprising the recombinant vector of claim 87.

Claim 91 (new): The recombinant host cell of claim 90, wherein the host cell is a prokaryotic cell.

Claim 92 (new): The recombinant host cell of claim 90, wherein the host cell is a eukaryotic cell.

Claim 93 (new): The recombinant host cell of claim 90 in a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

Claim 94 (new): A method of preparing a STRAP polypeptide, comprising: transforming a cell with the polynucleic acid of claim 81 to produce STRAP under conditions suitable for the expression of said polypeptide.